

Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism

May 26, 2016

CARITAS

1125 Commerce Road, Richmond VA 23224

MINUTES

Advisory Board Meeting Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:14 a.m. by Chair Elizabeth Childress.

A new staff member, Joy Wade, was introduced and welcomed. Joy is a new AmeriCorps Program Officer. Joy comes to AmeriCorps from VDSS Family Services and brings strong experience in program monitoring and grant administration.

Adoption of the Agenda

A motion was made to adopt the agenda. The motion was properly seconded and passed.

Adoption of the April 18, 2016 Minutes

A motion was made to adopt the April 18, 2016 minutes. The motion was properly seconded and passed.

Host Agency Presentation

Liz then introduced Karen Stanley, Executive CEO of CARITAS, the host agency for the Board Meeting. Karen played a video about their organization and the people who receive services at CARITAS. CARITAS is a homeless shelter that provides a multitude of services for people in the Richmond, VA area who face homelessness and the challenges of this population. CARITAS services include a furniture bank, job skills training, and substance abuse intervention. Karen shared that CARITAS received recognition from Points of Light as an organization that uses volunteers to provide services and items. Karen said that AmeriCorps Members serve with CARITAS in all capacities. Karen reported that some of the former clients who come to CARITAS for services have been transitioned to become AmeriCorps Members themselves. This gives the clients the opportunity to gain more positive work experiences and to give back to these programs.

Public Comment

Mark Fero gave public comment from the Virginia Service Foundation. Mark reported the Foundation is financially in good shape. They are setting aside \$2,000 for future projects such as Day of Service and 9/11 National Day of Service & Remembrance. Mark said the Foundation would like to offer scholarships and support to AmeriCorps Members, AmeriCorps programs and support of volunteers.

Investment Strategies for AmeriCorps 2017/18 and Beyond

Gail presented a slide presentation on recommended Strategic Changes for AmeriCorps. She reviewed historical funding in Virginia as compared to other states of comparable size. The trend data shows that Virginia funds, through the formula funding process, many more (small) AC programs than other states: 20 in Virginia with a typical of 10-12 programs in comparable states. The data also shows that Virginia does not obtain nearly as much in competitive grant funding as many other states of a similar size. Virginia has three competitive awards at somewhere over one-half million dollars while several comparable states get \$2 - \$3 million in competitive awards.

Since our goal is to expand the positive impact of AmeriCorps in Virginia then we must develop and fund highly effective programs that can obtain CNCS competitive funding. That is the only way to bring additional AC funds into Virginia.

Challenges to meeting that goal were discussed.

- Some historical program investments are no longer strong
- Some programs are not focused; fragmented; can't tell the overall impact
- The bar is now much higher in Virginia and much, much higher nationally
- Especially around performance measurement, evaluation and use of evidence-based approaches: many of our programs fall short in these areas
- Our three-year cycle doesn't force competition among all applicants
- Change is slow with the 3-year funding cycle
- AC staff have been focused on compliance rather than quality

- Proactive cultivation of new programs has been limited

A theory of change for how we will reach goals of having more competitive programs which leverage more CNCS funding which result in greater impact in Virginia. Several recommendations for change over the next three year cycle were presented:

1. At the July all-program training, alert all programs to the changes and new expectations
2. Require all programs to re-compete next year for 2017/18 funding
3. View all programs, new and re-compete, as equal applicants. A clean slate.
4. Aim to fund the strongest 10 – 12 programs from Formula funding for 2017-18
5. Prep those programs to apply for Competitive funding in 1 to 3 years

The Board discussed the recommendations and the ramifications of each. Feedback was positive and the Board agreed that change is needed. A motion was made to endorse the recommended changes. The motion was seconded and approved.

Committee Meetings

The Board broke into sub-committee meetings at 12:20.

Committee Reports

The meeting was re-convened at 1:20 pm

Service and Outreach Committee Report

Steven Valdez gave the Service and Outreach Committee Report including the following:

- Review of feedback from the Governor's Volunteer & Community Service Awards and the media coverage of the event. The committee also discussed the surveys from volunteer centers.
- the status of the new Volunteer Virginia website implementation and the testing of the site. He noted that the new website will be launched about mid July 2016.
- plans for 9/11 Day of Service and Day to Serve.
- the upcoming Volunteer Conference in May 2017. The committee will be looking for conference speakers and ideas for workshops. He said the committee asks for help from the Board to support the Conference planning committee and in getting speakers and ideas for workshops.

Communications Committee Report

Karen Stanley gave the Communications Committee Report. She reported:

- the Governor's Volunteer & Community Service Awards event went well. The Committee thought it was helpful to have Board Members judging to help with logistics. The Committee discussed parking options for future Service Awards.
- the idea of combining the Service Awards with the Volunteer Conference was explored but they decided not to do so because Governor McAuliffe likes having this event at the Governor's Mansion.
- planning of the 2017 Virginia Volunteerism Conference has begun. The Conference Planning Committee has chosen the slogan for this year's conference. The slogan will be "Learn, Lead, Mobilize". Karen noted that the Conference Marketing & Outreach Committee needs people to help. Karen said that Early Bird registration should be open sometime in October or November.

Executive Session for the Program Committee Report of Funding Recommendations

Liz Childress informed the Board that the Program Report needed to be presented in closed session to discuss the proposed funding for the AmeriCorps grants for 2016/17. She then read the rules for a public board to go into closed executive session.

"We have a letter from Bill Basl, the Director of AmeriCorps, saying that information related to CNCS' competitive funding decisions is embargoed until early June. He says that funding information should not be shared with the press, social media, followers, email list subscribers, elected officials, or outside partners.

Because the embargoed information from CNCS is closely tied to plans for use of formula funds, which are also in the recommendation stage, we must proceed very carefully. Until the notices of funding are received by OVCS

from CNCS these funding plans are tentative. The funding plan created by staff, and soon to be shared here, is based on a structured review process, and reflects the ranking that a review team developed.

Given all this, this funding information, developed through a competitive procurement process and funded by CNCS, is not yet ready to be shared, and doing so would jeopardize Virginia's relationship with its funder, the Corporation for National and Community Service. Further, this process will result in contracts investing public funds. Public discussion of terms and conditions may adversely affect our position in negotiating contracts.

I will soon ask for a motion and subsequent action, reflecting the requirements and intent of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, to close this meeting while we consider AmeriCorps funding recommendations. Once we close the meeting, only issues pertinent to funding recommendations may be discussed. Following the closed portion of the meeting, we will reconvene in open session. At that time, I will ask if any member of this body believes that there was a departure from the discussion requirements. If anyone believes that there was a departure from the requirements, he or she must state so, and indicate the substance of that departure. Next, we will record a roll call vote in which each of us certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements AND only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting by the public body. This vote will be included in the minutes of the open meeting." "Before I call for the motion, what questions do you have about the process?"

Liz asked Board Members if they had any questions. Hearing none, Liz then made the motion:

"I move that the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism convene in closed session to discuss the results of the competitive procurement process for investing public funds in AmeriCorps programming opportunities pursuant to the investment of public funds exemption at Section 2.2-3711(A)(6) of the Code of Virginia, and the possible award of public contracts involving the expenditure of public funds and discussion of the terms or scope of such contracts, pursuant to the award of contracts using public funds exemption at Section 2.2-3711(A)(29)."

The motion was properly seconded and so moved. The meeting then went into closed executive session at 1:32 pm.

Program Committee Report

During the closed executive session the funding recommendations for 2016/17 AmeriCorps grants were presented and discussed.

After the closed executive session, a motion was made to re-open the meeting. The motion was properly seconded and so moved.

Return to Open Session

Liz Children stated: "Consistent with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, we will conduct a roll call affirmation in which each of us is asked to certify the appropriateness of the content of the closed session.

Prior to that, however, I now ask whether any member of this body believes that there was a departure from the requirements of the FOIA. If so, please share that information now, and identify the substance of that departure."

"Hearing none we will proceed with a roll call. The question here is for you to certify that to the best of your knowledge (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements AND (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting by the public body."

A roll call was made of members to certify that they agree nothing other than the confidential information was discussed during the closed executive session. Eva Hite called each Board Member present to so certify and each Board Member did so certify.

Program Committee Recommendation

Vanessa Diamond, Chair of the Program Committee reported: The Program Committee would like to move that the full Board formally concur with the staff funding strategy and recommendations, knowing that there may yet be some modest shifts based on individual programs' decisions. The motion was properly seconded and approved.

College Compact Signing

Gail Harris reported on the signing of the College Compact for National Service. This is a Compact with Virginia Universities and Colleges to promote National Service on campuses. Gail outlined the background of how this idea was developed. She said the College Compact was signed by all public colleges and universities in Virginia, along with some private colleges.

Liz talked about the luncheon held at the Governor's Mansion on May 25, 2016, hosted by the First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe. A meeting was held at the Virginia Department of Social Services after the luncheon to discuss where these service opportunities might be. The idea and compact are still in planning stages.

Mark Fero added that the colleges and universities fully support having the next College Compact Summit in Danville, VA in October 2016.

Director's report

Gail Harris reported on several items in her Director's report:

- AmeriCorps will receive additional grant funds of \$110,000 for training and technical assistance. The funds will meet several high priority needs. (1) increase AmeriCorps services in rural and underserved areas of the Commonwealth with Petersburg as a target area (2) Performance Measurement individualized technical assistance with consultant assistance. (3) field of service/best practices training in the areas of education and youth work. (4) improve Commission capacity such as knowledge of effective intermediary models.
- In June Jen Kerner with Corporation for National and Community Services will be in the office for 2-3 days for a Commission technical assistance visit.
- Gail and Gay Plungas will be going to the 2016 Points of Light Conference in Detroit, MI June 26 – 30, 2016. Governor's Advisory Board Member Ashley Hall and Volunteer Alexandria Executive Director Marion Brunken will also be attending the Conference.
- In July, Staff will host training for Program Directors of our AmeriCorps programs. This training will be July 18-20, 2016. Day to Serve will be recognized from September 11th – October 10th.

CNCS Report

Tynetta Darden, Director at the State Office of CNCS had no news to report.

Liz Childress then took time to report that Lettie Bien is leaving the Board. Liz thanked Lettie for all her hard work and active participation.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made. The motion was properly made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

GH/esh